

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A search system for searching design asset  
information to find information, which a user has privilege to  
5 access and which is requested by the user, and for providing  
the user with the privileged and requested information, the  
search system comprising:

a first memory for storing the design asset information;  
a processor for retrieving information, which the user  
10 has privilege to access, from the design asset information;  
and  
a second memory for storing the retrieved privileged  
information.

15 2. The search system according to claim 1, wherein the  
first memory includes a first database for collecting the  
design asset information and a second database for collecting  
access control information used to set access privileges to  
the design asset information, the processor refers to the  
20 access control information to retrieve the privileged  
information from the first database, and the second memory  
includes a third database for collecting the privileged  
information.

25 3. The search system according to claim 2, wherein the  
access control information includes information of access  
privilege groups for setting the access privileges to the  
design asset information and information for defining at least  
one of the access privilege groups to which the user belongs,  
30 and wherein the third database is generated for each of the  
access privilege groups.

4. The search system according to claim 2, wherein the  
third database is generated when the user starts a session and

is held until the session is terminated.

5. The search system according to claim 2, further comprising:

5 at least one server including the first database, the second database, and the third database; and

at least one client computer connected to the server through a network;

10 wherein the user inputs a search query in the client computer, the client computer sends the search query to the server, the server acquires design asset information that matches the search query from the third database, and the server provides the acquired design asset information to the client computer.

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6. The search system according to claim 5, wherein the design asset information is IP catalogue information that includes management information, substantial data, and category classification information of IP catalogues, wherein  
20 the processor refers to the access control information to retrieve the management information, the substantial data, and the category classification information of IP catalogues, which the user has privilege to access, and wherein the third database includes a first retrieved information database for  
25 collecting the retrieved management information, a second retrieved information database for collecting the retrieved substantial data, and a third retrieved information database for collecting the retrieved category classification information.

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7. The search system according to claim 6, wherein the server searches the first retrieved information database for the management information of IP catalogues that match the search query of the user and provides the management

information of the matched IP catalogues to the client computer.

8. The search system according to claim 6, wherein the server searches the second retrieved information database for the substantial data of IP catalogues that match the search query of the user and provides the substantial data of the matched IP catalogues to the client computer.

9. The search system according to claim 6, wherein the server searches the third retrieved information database for the category classification information of IP catalogues that match the search query of the user and provides the category classification information of the matched IP catalogues to the client computer.

10. A system for searching design asset information comprising:

at least one server computer; and

at least one client computer connected to the at least one server computer, wherein the server computer includes:

a first memory for storing the design asset information; and

a processor for retrieving information, which a user has privilege to access, from the design asset information and generating a retrieved information database of the retrieved privileged information when the user logs in to the server computer from the client computer, wherein, when the user inputs a search query in the client computer and sends the search query to the server computer, the server computer searches the retrieved information database for privileged information that matches the users query and provides the matched privileged information to the client computer.

11. The search system according to claim 10, wherein the  
retrieved information database is held from when the user logs  
in to the server computer to when the user logs out from the  
5 server computer.

12. The search system according to claim 10, wherein the  
user belongs to at least one group, wherein the privileged  
information is information, which the group the user belongs  
10 to has privilege to access.

13. The search system according to claim 10, wherein the  
first memory includes an original database for collecting the  
design asset information and a control database for collecting  
15 access control information of the design asset information,  
wherein the processor refers to the access control information  
to retrieve the privileged information from the original  
database.

14. The search system according to claim 13, wherein  
each piece of the design asset information includes an index  
and substantial data, and wherein the control database  
includes a definition database defining a group to which the  
user belongs, a catalogue access privilege database defining  
25 groups having privilege to access the index, and a substantial  
data access privilege database defining groups having  
privilege to access the substantial data.

15. A method for searching design asset information  
30 stored in a memory, the method comprising the steps of:  
retrieving information, which a user has privilege to  
access, from the design asset information when the user logs  
in to a server computer from at least one client computer;  
generating a retrieved information database by collecting

the retrieved privileged information;

searching the retrieved information database, when the user inputs a search query through the client computer, for the privileged information that matches the search query; and

5 providing the matched privileged information to the client computer.

16. A program for searching design asset information stored in a memory to run a computer, the program comprising  
10 the steps of:

retrieving information, which a user has privilege to access, from the design asset information when the user logs in to a server computer from at least one client computer;

generating a retrieved information database by collecting  
15 the retrieved privileged information;

searching the retrieved information database, when the user inputs a search query through the client computer, for the privileged information that matches the search query; and

providing the matched privileged information to the  
20 client computer.

17. A program storage device accessible by a computer, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computer to perform method steps for searching design asset  
25 information stored in a memory to run the computer, the program comprising the steps of:

retrieving information, which a user has privilege to access, from the design asset information when the user logs in to a server computer from at least one client computer;

30 generating a retrieved information database by collecting the retrieved privileged information;

searching the retrieved information database, when the user inputs a search query through the client computer, for the privileged information that matches the search query; and

providing the matched privileged information to the  
client computer.